
PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE

Section 1. General administrative information

Title of project

Regional Forum Facilitation Services

BPA project number: 9800800

Contract renewal date (mm/yyyy):

5/1999

☐ Multiple actions?

Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding

DS Consulting

Business acronym (if appropriate)

Proposal contact person or principal investigator:

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NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses

This activity is not specifically referenced in the Fish and Wildlife Program. However, improved coordination, dialogue and decisionmaking among fish and wildlife co-managers is a tenet that runs through the region's Fish and Wildlife Program.

FWS/NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses

RPA 1f- Biological Opinion on Reinitiation of Consultation on 1994-1998 operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System and Juvenile Transportation Program in 1995 and Future Years, March 2, 1995.

Other planning document references

The Regional Forum structure was contemplated under the 1995 Snake River Recovery Plan and its subsequent 1997 "Final Draft". The use of impartial facilitation services was addressed in the settlement agreement of American Rivers, Inc. vs. NMFS, 1996. More recently, NMFS 1997 Regional Forum's Implementation Team and Technical Management Team meeting minutes reflect strong support for such services from all participating agencies.

Short description

Facilitate discussions of Regional Forum teams to enable more active and effective participation of all team members. Mediate conflicts as they may arise in and out of meetings and provide "process guidance" to improve decision making.

Target species

Multi

Section 2. Sorting and evaluation

Subbasin
Systemwide

Evaluation Process Sort

CBFWA caucus	Special evaluation process	ISRP project type
Mark one or more caucus	If your project fits either of these processes, mark one or both	Mark one or more categories
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish <input type="checkbox"/> Resident fish <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-year (milestone-based evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed project evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed councils/model watersheds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information dissemination <input type="checkbox"/> Operation & maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> New construction <input type="checkbox"/> Research & monitoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation & management <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife habitat acquisitions

Section 3. Relationships to other Bonneville projects

Umbrella / sub-proposal relationships. List umbrella project first.

Project #	Project title/description
0	none

Other dependent or critically-related projects

Project #	Project title/description	Nature of relationship

Section 4. Objectives, tasks and schedules

Past accomplishments

Year	Accomplishment	Met biological objectives?
98	Facilitated all Regional Forum teams beginning in June 1998	
98	Facilitated resolution of issues at team level	
98	Reduced number of issues raised to IT for resolution from technical teams	
98	Improved decision making on mainstem hydroelectric issues	

Objectives and tasks

Obj 1,2,3	Objective	Task a,b,c	Task
1	Improve communication and functioning of Regional Forum meetings	a	Professionally facilitate all regular and special meetings of Regional Forum Teams (Executive Committee, Implementation Team, Dissolved Gas Team, Technical Management Team, and System Configuration Team)
		b	Facilitate decision making conference calls as requested
		c	Work with team members to ensure the timely completion of tasks that affect the decision making abilities of the group
2	Improve decision making on mainstem hydroelectric issues	a	Assist members in developing issue papers that accurately and objectively reflect the issue so that others may make effective decisions
		b	Provide consultation on process related issues to increase the effectiveness of Regional Forum decision making processes
		c	Between meetings, explore alternative solutions to issues among participants to enable decision making at meetings
3	Ensure meeting correspondence accurately reflects discussions, decisions and commitments	a	Provide facilitator summary notes, review meeting minutes for accuracy.

Objective schedules and costs

Obj #	Start date mm/yyyy	End date mm/yyyy	Measureable biological objective(s)	Milestone	FY2000 Cost %
1	10/2000	9/2001			60.00%
2	10/2000	9/2001			30.00%
3	10/2000	9/2001			10.00%
				Total	100.00%

Schedule constraints

No known constraints

Completion date

The project is ongoing, but may be terminated without loss of prior year investment.

Section 5. Budget

FY99 project budget (BPA obligated): \$200,000

FY2000 budget by line item

Item	Note	% of total	FY2000
Personnel	Lead facilitator at \$150.00 p/h. 800 hours of meetings, preparation and work with participants.	% 65	120,000
Fringe benefits	NA	% 0	
Supplies, materials, non-expendable property		% 1	1,500
Operations & maintenance		% 0	
Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.)		% 0	
NEPA costs		% 0	
Construction-related support		% 0	
PIT tags	# of tags:	% 0	
Travel	Travel to meetings outside of Portland area only	% 7	12,000
Indirect costs		% 0	
Subcontractor	One or more assistant facilitators at \$100 p/h. 500 hours	% 27	50,000
Other		% 0	
TOTAL BPA FY2000 BUDGET REQUEST			\$183,500

Cost sharing

Organization	Item or service provided	% total project cost (incl. BPA)	Amount (\$)
none		% 0	
		% 0	
		% 0	
		% 0	
Total project cost (including BPA portion)			\$183,500

Outyear costs

	FY2001	FY02	FY03	FY04
Total budget	\$200,000	\$215,000	\$230,000	\$245,000

Section 6. References

Watershed?	Reference
<input type="checkbox"/>	NMFS. 1995. Biological Opinion on Reinitiation of Consultation on 1994-1998 Operation of Federal Columbia River Power System and Juvenile Transport Program in 1995 & Future Years describing need for team structure and regional collaboration. Portland, OR
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

PART II - NARRATIVE

Section 7. Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) established a consensus-based Regional Forum to coordinate and oversee implementation of the 1995 Biological Opinion on Hydro Operations in the Columbia River. At the heart of this Forum are teams comprised of Federal, State and Tribal sovereigns, fish and wildlife managers and hydro operators. These teams deal with both real time operation decisions and long term policies that affect the operation of hydro facilities and, as a result, fish and wildlife on the Columbia River.

Due to the variety of interests affecting decisions on the Columbia River, the teams determined in 1997 that the assistance of a neutral and professional facilitator would best support the established consensus process. The use of a facilitator with a strong background in conflict management has proved useful in many situations presented during the 1998 migration season. The purpose of the facilitation service is: to allow all agencies to participate equally in team meetings, to improve the process by which decisions are made in the Forum, to facilitate discussions that lead to effective regional decisions and to work with participants to meet deadlines and resolve conflicts as they arise. Results of this project will be evaluated and monitored by regular surveying of team participants regarding satisfaction with services rendered and perceived improvements in the overall decision making of the Regional Forum.

Section 8. Project description

a. Technical and/or scientific background

The NMFS 1995 Biological Opinion suggested the use of a technical management team to discuss and make decisions about hydro operations in the Columbia River. NMFS established the Regional Forum to make both technical and policy decisions on these matters. Prior to June of 1998, NMFS served as the “facilitating” chair of both the Executive Committee and Implementation Team. The System Configuration Team was jointly chaired/facilitated by NMFS and the Northwest Power Planning Council (NPPC), the Dissolved Gas Team jointly chaired/facilitated by NMFS and NPPC, and the Technical Management Team chaired/facilitated by the Army Corps of Engineers. In 1997 and 1998, a number of team members raised concerns that the meetings were not effective, agendas were not followed, and overall, the process was dysfunctional. It was determined that part of these concerns were whether these meetings were facilitated in a neutral manner, enabling all parties to participate equally. In June of 1998 a professional facilitation team specializing in natural resource issues was hired to assist. The facilitators have helped to manage meeting agendas, kept discussions focused, insured all participants had an opportunity to participate fully, assisted with the resolution of difficult decisions, provided negotiation and process guidance, insured that action items were completed in a timely manner, and helped the chairs determine whether or not meetings should be held. Team members have expressed a high degree of satisfaction and appreciation for these services.

b. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs

The issues facing fish and wildlife managers and hydro operators in the Columbia River are both complex and contentious. There are a variety of perspectives and voices that must be considered in any decision making and implementation process in the region. These perspectives must come from people within the region who have a stake in the outcome of any decisions. Embracing the issues with a collaborative spirit has proven to be very challenging given the biological, economic, and emotional values that are involved. And yet, collaboration of regional partners is crucial to the overall success and satisfaction of the Columbia River fish and wildlife program.

The continuation of this project will support improvements in the overall functioning and coordination of regional decisions and implementation efforts related to Columbia River hydro operations and fish and

wildlife management. Overall effectiveness of regional meetings has great significance to the region. Members who had previously withdrawn from the process are beginning to become engaged again. As the meetings improve, more regional members are able to participate actively in the decision making process. The perspective of neutral facilitators will continue to enable the region to better determine the need for and changes in meetings. The success of these dialogues is important to the continued efforts to restore threatened and endangered species to the Columbia River.

c. Relationships to other projects

Because the Regional Forum addresses primarily hydroelectric operations issues, the successful functioning of the Forum as a coordination and decision making body affects numerous projects related to both the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Program and the 1995 Biological Opinion. Examples include dissolved gas studies and abatement measures, smolt monitoring activities, facilities improvement research, transportation and survival studies, regional agreement on the Corps' fish and wildlife budget, and capital construction projects.

d. Project history (for ongoing projects)

As noted above, this project began in 1998 at the request of Regional Forum members to help coordinate and manage the ongoing discussions of various Regional Forum teams. Other than facilitating all regular and special meetings and conference calls, the facilitators have helped the group make changes to the process by establishing: groundrules for meetings; revisions to agendas; changes in overall process guidelines to enable better dialogue and decisions; a quarterly meeting of the team chairs to foster greater coordination of the Regional Forum's efforts; and a facilitator's summary that captures action items needing to be accomplished between meetings. This project will allow such services to continue as the region seeks to make difficult decisions related to fish and wildlife management.

e. Proposal objectives

To enhance the impartiality and functioning of the Regional Forum in several ways by:

- relieving the Chairs of the dual role of meeting chair and meeting facilitator so they may better focus on the substance of meetings as opposed to the process;
- employing meeting management techniques to keep discussions focused and make the best use of limited time;
- facilitating clear communication among participants;
- ensuring that issues are adequately discussed;
- resolving disputes as they arise;
- ensuring that meeting participants are adequately represented in any official meeting minutes;
- ensuring that team members follow through with action items, especially those that enable decisions to be made; and
- assisting members reach regional agreements on issues related to hydropower operations for juvenile and adult salmon, modifications to the FCRPS necessary to increase salmon survival, and other matters that may come before the committees.

f. Methods

Facilitation services will include:

1. Facilitate all meetings and conference calls of the Executive Committee, Implementation Team, three technical teams and any sub-committees that may be formed.
2. Assist members or participants in the development and prioritization of agendas for meetings of the Regional Forum teams.
3. Manage the meeting agenda and allotted times for efficient consideration of matters before committees. Recognize time-sensitive issues and facilitate prioritization of activities to ensure timely decisions.

4. Utilize professional facilitation skills and meeting techniques to keep discussions on the subject, ensure full and clear exchanges of views, and ensure that all members have sufficient opportunity to be heard.
5. Assist the members or participants in identifying work products needed and obtain commitments from members regarding the preparation of materials (e.g. briefing papers or reports) or analyses that will adequately frame issues for discussion and/or decision by the Implementation Team and Executive Committee members.
6. Assist the members in ensuring that briefing papers, decision memoranda, or other documents accurately reflect the issues, and that they contain sufficient information to move the issue forward or, alternatively, document decisions and their basis.
7. Assist members in exploring opportunities for reducing or resolving conflicts.
8. Vigorously pursue consensus whenever possible. When it is apparent that no consensus can be reached, accurately characterize the differing views and recommended alternative approaches or actions necessary to bring the issue to closure.
9. As requested, work with individual members or participants between meetings to clarify issues, resolve conflicts, seek potential compromises, or otherwise advance issues for consideration by the full membership.
10. Ensure that the "Interim Procedures" are followed and updated in the preparation for and conduct of Implementation Team and Executive Committee meetings.
11. Enhance the continuity of work effort between teams by providing an inter-team coordination capability and by keeping members informed of potential problems.

g. Facilities and equipment

The primary physical requirements associated with this project are meeting rooms and teleconference facilities. Meetings are normally held at the Portland Offices of NMFS, NPPC and the Corps. Each of these entities has adequate facilities and support (fax, copying, phone etc.) to support this ongoing effort.

h. Budget

The budget requested in this proposal provides the fee for services rendered by the lead facilitator, a skilled professional mediator and facilitator of natural resource issues in the Northwest, and assistant facilitators. The fee for services quoted is an average rate for such services in the region. Also included is minimal money for travel outside of the Portland region, should that be required. The budget considers the level of effort expended in 1998 and anticipated in FY2000.

Section 9. Key personnel

Donna L. Silverberg, Lead Facilitator

Ms. Silverberg will continue to be the Lead Facilitator on this project. She will be responsible for more than 60% of all facilitation services, will coordinate efforts with skilled facilitators/ subcontractors and provide all administrative support necessary to fulfill the responsibilities associated with this project. She has had over ten years of experience working with conflict resolution and facilitation services in the area of natural resources and land use. She was the Acting Director of Oregon's Dispute Resolution Commission, the Special Assistant for Dispute Resolution for Governor Kitzhaber's Natural Resources Office, and the Public Policy Dispute Resolution Coordinator for the State of Oregon. She has mediated over 500 disputes and facilitated a wide range of policy issues, including the Regional Forum. Ms. Silverberg is the principal of DS Consulting, a full service mediation, facilitation, and skills training firm in Portland, Oregon.

One page resume attached.

Section 10. Information/technology transfer

Information will continue to be transmitted via e-mail, fax and the Corps' TMT Home page. If deemed appropriate, public involvement workshops may be utilized to disseminate information and seek input from public members who are not regularly invited to participate actively in Regional Forum meetings.

Congratulations!